



**APPARITION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN
ON THE MOUNTAIN OF LA SALETTE**

19 SEPTEMBER 1846

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PUBLISHED BY
THE SHEPHERDESS OF LA SALETTE

WITH
IMPRIMATUR BY MONSIGNOR BISHOP OF LECCE.

“Well, my children, you will pass this on to all of my people.”

(Simple reproduction, without commentary or controversy,
of the original edition of Lecce in 1879.)

COVER ART: Our Lady of La Salette, in tears (1st stage of the apparition). *
Scan of a French postcard from 1896.



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THE APPARITION

Only the witness herself, Melanie, along with Maximin, can give an account of the apparition. After giving it by word of mouth an incalculable number of times, she decided to write it all down in 1878. It was published at Lecce on November 15, 1879—with the “Imprimatur” of Bishop Zola—and reprinted “ne varietur” at Lyon in 1904, a few months before Melanie's death. This slim booklet is now a rarity. The text is followed here.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The original text of the Message and Secret of La Salette, approved by the Catholic Church, are published here in their entirety for the first time in the English Language.

We sincerely thank Mr. Joseph Corteville, President of the *Association of the Children of Notre Dame of La Salette and of Saint Louis Marie Grignion of Montford* +, and Director of *L'Impartial* +, a Marian revue, to have graciously supplied us with this manuscript and for authorizing us to publish same.

In our turn, we authorize all people, journalists, editors, or associations to republish this faithfully in whole or in part.

It is essential that these prophetic messages be wide spread more than ever in all of the world and as quickly as possible. It is an order from the Mother of God. “*Well, my children, you will pass it on to all of my people.*”

We are counting on the support and initiative of all people of good will to attain our goal. We ask Our Lady's blessings on this apostolate and its supporters.

The Editors

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I

On the 18th of September (1846), the eve of the Holy Apparition of the Holy Virgin, I was alone, as usual, watching over my Master's cows. Around eleven o'clock in the morning, I saw a small boy walking towards me. I was frightened at this, for it seemed to me that everyone ought to know that I avoided all kinds of company. This boy came up to me and said:

"Little girl, I'm coming with you, I'm from Corps too." At these words, the natural evil in me soon showed itself, and taking a few steps back, I told him, "I don't want anybody around. I want to be alone." But the boy followed me, saying, "Go on, let me stay with you. My Master told me to come and watch over my cows together with yours. I'm from Corps."

I walked away from him, gesturing to him that I didn't want anybody around, and when I was some distance away, I sat down on the grass. There, I used to talk with the little flowers of the Good Lord.

A moment later, I looked behind me, and there I found Maximin sitting close to me. Straightway he says to me, "Keep me with you. I'll be very good."

But the natural evil in me will not hear reason. I jump to my feet, and run a little farther off without saying a word and again I start playing with the little flowers of the Good Lord. In an instant, Maximin was there again, telling me he would be very good, that he wouldn't talk, that he would get bored all by himself, and that his Master had sent him to be with me, etc. This time, I took pity, I gestured to him to sit down, and I kept on playing with the little flowers of the Good Lord.

It wasn't long before Maximin broke the silence by bursting into laughter (I think he was making fun of me). I look at him and he says to me, "Let's have some fun, let's make up a game." I said nothing in reply, for I was so ignorant I didn't understand what games with other people were, always having been alone. I played with the flowers, on my own, and Maximin came right up close to me, doing nothing but laughing, telling me the flowers didn't have ears to listen to me and that we should play together instead. But I had no liking for the game he told me to play. I started talking to him, however, and he told me that the ten days he was to spend with his Master would soon be over and then he would go home to his father in Corps etc.

While he was talking, I heard the bell of La Salette. It was the Angelus. I gestured to Maximin to lift his soul up to God. He took off his hat and was silent for a moment. Then I said, "Do you want to have dinner?" "Yes, he replied, let's eat." We sat down and I brought out of my bag the provisions my Master had given me. As was my habit,

before breaking into my little round loaf, I made a cross with the point of my knife on the bread, and a little hole in the middle, saying, "If the devil is in there, may he leave, and if the Good Lord is in there, may he stay!" I rapidly covered up the little hole. Maximin burst into laughter and kicked the loaf out of my hands. It rolled down the mountainside and was lost from sight. I had another piece of bread that we shared. Afterwards, we played a game. Then, realizing that Maximin must still be hungry, I pointed out a place on the mountainside covered with all kinds of berries. I urged him to go and eat some and he went straight away. He ate a few berries and brought back his hat full of them. In the evening, we walked back down the mountain together and promised to come back the next day and watch over our cows together.

The next day, the 19th of September, I met Maximin on the way up. We climbed up the mountainside together. I discovered that Maximin was a very good, simple boy, and would willingly talk about what I wanted to talk about. He was also very flexible and had no fixed opinions. He was just a little curious, for, when I walked away from him, as soon as he saw I had stopped, he would run over to me to see what I was doing and hear what I was saying to the flowers of the Good Lord. If he arrived too late, he would ask me what I had said.

Maximin told me to teach him a game. It was already late morning. I told him to gather some flowers for the "Paradise." We set to work together. Soon we had a number of flowers of various colors. I could hear the village Angelus ringing, for the weather was fine and there wasn't a cloud in the sky. Having told the Good Lord what we had learned, I said to Maximin that we ought to drive our cows on to a small plateau near the gully, where there would be stones to build the "Paradise." We drove our cows to the selected spot and then had a small meal. Then we started collecting stones to build our little house, which comprised of a so-called ground floor, which was where we were to live, and then a story above, which was to be, as we called it, "Paradise."

This story was decorated all over with different-colored flowers, with garlands hanging from flower stalks. This "Paradise" was covered by a single large stone, which we had strewn with flowers. We had also hung garlands all the way round. When we had finished, we sat and looked at the "Paradise." We began to feel sleepy and having moved a couple of feet away, we went to sleep on the grass.

II

When I woke up, I couldn't see the cows, so I called Maximin and climbed up the little mound. From there I could see our cows grazing peacefully and I was on my way down, with Maximin on his way up, when all at once I saw a beautiful light shining more brightly than the sun.

“Maximin, do you see what is over there? Oh! My God!” At the same moment, I dropped the stick I was holding. Something inconceivably fantastic passed through me in that moment and I felt myself being drawn. I felt a great respect, full of love, and my heart beat faster.

I kept my eyes firmly fixed on this static light and, as if it had opened up, I caught sight of another, much more brilliant light that was moving. In this light, I saw a most beautiful lady sitting on top of our Paradise, with her head in her hands.

This beautiful Lady stood up; she coolly crossed her arms while watching us, and said to us, *“Come, my children, fear not, I am here to PROCLAIM GREAT NEWS TO YOU.”*

These soft and sweet words made me fly to her, and my heart desired to attach itself to her forever.

When I was up close to the Beautiful Lady, in front of her to her right, she began to speak and from her beautiful eyes tears also started to flow.

“If my people do not wish to submit themselves, I am forced to let go of the hand of my Son. It is so heavy and weighs me down so much I can no longer keep hold of it.

“I have suffered all of the time for the rest of you! If I do not wish my Son to abandon you, I must take it upon myself to pray for this continually. And the rest of you think little of this. In vain you will pray, in vain you will act, and you will never be able to make up for the trouble I have taken over for the rest of you.

“I gave you six days to work; I kept the seventh for myself, and no one wishes to grant it to me. This is what weighs down the arm of my Son so much.

“Those who drive carts cannot speak without putting the name of my Son in the middle.

“These are the two things which weigh down the arm of my Son so much. If the harvest is spoiled, it is only because of the rest of you. I made you see this last year with the potatoes; you took little account of this. It was quite the opposite when you found bad potatoes, you swore oaths, and you included the name of my Son. They will continue to go bad, at Christmas there will be none left.”

At this point, I was trying to interpret the word “potatoes” (pommes de terre): I thought I understood it to be “apples” (pommes). ¹ The Beautiful and Good Lady, reading my thoughts, repeated thus:

“You do not understand, my children. I will tell it to you another way.

“If the harvest is spoiled, it does not seem to affect you. I made you see this last year with the potatoes. You took little account of this. It was quite the opposite when you found bad potatoes, you swore oaths, and you included the name of my Son. They will continue to go bad and at Christmas, there will be none left.

“If you have corn, you must not sow it. The beasts will eat all that you sow. And all that grows will fall to dust when you thresh it. A great famine will come. Before the famine comes, children under the age of seven will begin to tremble and will die in the arms of those who hold them. The others will do penance through hunger. The nuts will go bad, the grapes will become rotten.”

At this point, the Beautiful Lady, who was entrancing me, for a moment did not make herself heard. I could see, however, that she was continuing, as if speaking, to move graciously her kindly lips. At this moment, Maximin was receiving his secret. Then, turning to me, the Most Holy Virgin spoke to me and gave me a secret in French. Here is this secret in its entirety as she gave it to me.

III

“Melanie, what I am about to tell you now will not always be a secret. You may make it public in 1858.

“The priests, ministers of my Son, the priests, by their wicked lives, by their irreverence and their impiety in the celebration of the holy mysteries, by their love of money, their love of honors and pleasures, and the priests have become cesspools of impurity. Yes, the priests are asking vengeance, and vengeance is hanging over their heads. Woe to the priests and to those dedicated to God who by their unfaithfulness and their wicked lives are crucifying my Son again! The sins of those dedicated to God cry out towards Heaven and call for vengeance, and now vengeance is at their door, for there is no one left to beg mercy and forgiveness for the people. There are no more generous souls; there is no one left worthy of offering a stainless sacrifice to the Eternal for the sake of the world.

“God will strike in an unprecedented way.

“Woe to the inhabitants of the earth! God will exhaust His wrath upon them and no one will be able to escape so many afflictions together.

“The chiefs, the leaders of the people of God, have neglected prayer and penance, and the devil has bedimmed their intelligence. They have become wandering stars which the old devil will drag along with his tail to make them perish. God will allow the old serpent to cause divisions among those who reign in every society and in every family. Physical and moral agonies will be suffered. God will abandon mankind to itself and will send punishments that will follow one after the other for more than thirty-five years.

“The Society of men is on the eve of the most terrible scourges and of gravest events. Mankind must expect to be ruled with an iron rod and to drink from the chalice of the wrath of God.

“May the curate of my Son, Pope Pius IX, never leave Rome again after 1859; may he, however, be steadfast and noble, may he fight with the weapons of faith and love. I will be at his side. May he be on his guard against Napoleon: he is two-faced, and when he wishes to make himself Pope as well as Emperor, God will soon draw back from him. He is the mastermind who, always wanting to ascend further, will fall on the sword he wished to use to force his people to be raised up.

“Italy will be punished for her ambition in wanting to shake off the yoke of the Lord of Lords. Therefore, she will be left to fight a war; blood will flow on all sides. Churches will be locked up or desecrated. Priests and religious orders will be hunted down, and made to die a cruel death. Several will abandon the faith, and a great number of priests and members of religious orders will break away from the true religion. Among these people, there will even be bishops.

“May the Pope guard against the performers of miracles. For the time has come when the most astonishing wonders will take place on the earth and in the air.

“In the year 1864, Lucifer together with a large number of demons will be unloosed from hell; they will put an end to faith little by little, even in those dedicated to God. They will blind them in such a way, that, unless they are blessed with a special grace, these people will take on the spirit of these angels of hell; several religious institutions will lose all faith and will lose many souls.

“Evil books will be abundant on earth and the sprits of darkness will spread everywhere a universal slackening of all that concerns the service of God. They will have great power over Nature. There will be churches built to serve these spirits. People will be transported from one place to another by these evil spirits, even priests, for they will not have been guided by the good spirit of the Gospel, which is a spirit of humility, charity, and zeal for the glory of God. On occasions, the dead and the righteous will be brought back to life. (That is to say that, these dead will take on the form of righteous souls who had lived on earth, in order to lead men further astray. These so-called resurrected dead, who will be nothing but the devil in this form, will preach another Gospel contrary to that of the true Christ Jesus, denying the existence of Heaven; that is also to say, the souls of the damned. All these souls will appear as if fixed to their bodies.)²

“Everywhere there will be extraordinary wonders, as true faith has faded and false light brightens the people. Woe to the Princes of the Church who think only to pile riches upon riches to protect their authority and dominate with pride.

“The Vicar of my Son will suffer a great deal, because for a while the Church will yield to large persecution, a time of darkness, and the Church will witness a frightful crisis.

“The true faith to the Lord having been forgotten, each individual will want to be on his own and be superior to people of same identity, they will abolish civil rights as well as

ecclesiastical. All order and all justice would be trampled underfoot and only homicides, hate, jealousy, lies, and dissension would be seen without love for country or family.

“The Holy Father will suffer a great deal. I will be with him until the end and receive his sacrifice.

“The mischievous would attempt his life several times to do harm and shorten his days but neither him nor his successor will see the triumph of the Church of God.

“All the civil governments will have one and the same plan, which will be to abolish and do away with every religious principal to make way for materialism, atheism, spiritualism and vice of all kinds.

“In the year 1865, there will be desecration of holy places. In convents, the flowers of the Church will decompose and the devil will make himself like the King of all hearts. May those in charge of religious communities be on their guard against the people they must receive, for the devil will resort to all his evil tricks to introduce sinners into religious orders, for disorder and the love of carnal pleasures will be spread all over the earth.

“France, Italy, Spain, and England will be at war. Blood will flow in the streets. Frenchman will fight Frenchman. Italian will fight Italian. A general war will follow which will be appalling. For a time, God will cease to remember France and Italy because the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been forgotten. The wicked will make use of all their evil ways. Men will kill each other; massacre each other even in their homes.

“At the first blow of His thundering sword, the mountains and all Nature will tremble in terror, for the disorders and crimes of men have pierced the vault of the heavens. Paris will burn and Marseilles will be engulfed. Several cities will be shaken down and swallowed up by earthquakes. People will believe that all is lost. Nothing will be seen but murder, nothing will be heard but the clash of arms and blasphemy.

“The righteous will suffer greatly. Their prayers, their penances, and their tears will rise up to Heaven and all of God’s people will beg for forgiveness and mercy and will plead for my help and intercession. Then Jesus Christ, in an act of His justice and His great mercy will command His Angels to have all His enemies put to death. Suddenly, the persecutors of the Church of Jesus Christ and all those given over to sin will perish and the earth will become desert-like. Then peace will be made, and man will be reconciled with God. Jesus Christ will be served, worshipped, and glorified. Charity will flourish everywhere. The new kings will be the right arm of the holy Church, which will be strong, humble, and pious in its poor but fervent imitation of the virtues of Jesus Christ. The Gospel will be preached everywhere, and mankind will make great progress in its faith, for there will be unity among the workers of Jesus Christ and man will live in fear of God.

“This peace among men will be short-lived. Twenty-five years of plentiful harvests will make them forget that the sins of men are the cause of all the troubles on this earth.

“A forerunner of the Antichrist, with his troops gathered from several nations, will fight against the true Christ, the only Savior of the world. He will shed much blood and will want to annihilate the worship of God to make himself be looked upon as a God.

“The earth will be struck by calamities of all kinds (in addition to plague and famine, which will be wide-spread). There will be a series of wars until the last war, which will then be fought by the ten Kings of the Antichrist, all of whom will have one and the same plan and will be the only rulers of the world. Before this comes to pass, there will be a kind of false peace in the world. People will think of nothing but amusement. The wicked will give themselves over to all kinds of sin. But the children of the holy Church, the children of my faith, my true followers, they will grow in their love for God and in all the virtues most precious to me. Blessed are the souls humbly guided by the Holy Spirit! I shall fight at their side until they reach a fullness of years.

“Nature is asking for vengeance because of man, and she trembles with dread at what must happen to the earth stained with crime. Tremble, earth, and you who proclaim yourselves as serving Jesus Christ and who, on the inside, only adore yourselves, tremble, for God will hand you over to His enemy, because the holy places are in a state of corruption. Many convents are no longer houses of God, but the grazing-grounds of Asmodeas and his like. It will be during this time that the Antichrist will be born of a Hebrew nun, a false virgin who will communicate with the old serpent, the master of impurity, his father will be B. At birth, he will spew out blasphemy; he will have teeth, in a word; he will be the devil incarnate. He will scream horribly, he will perform wonders; he will feed on nothing but impurity. He will have brothers who, although not devils incarnate like him, will be children of evil. At the age of twelve, they will draw attention upon themselves by the gallant victories they will have won; soon they will each lead armies, aided by the legions of hell.

“The seasons will be altered, the earth will produce nothing but bad fruit, the stars will lose their regular motion, and the moon will only reflect a faint reddish glow. Water and fire will give the earth's globe convulsions and terrible earthquakes will swallow up mountains, cities, etc...

“Rome will lose the faith and become the seat of the Antichrist.

“The demons of the air together with the Antichrist will perform great wonders on earth and in the atmosphere, and men will become more and more perverted. God will take care of His faithful servants and men of good will. The Gospel will be preached everywhere, and all peoples of all nations will get to know the truth.

"I make an urgent appeal to the earth. I call on the true disciples of the living God who reigns in Heaven. I call on the true followers of Christ made man, the only true Savior of men. I call on my children, the true faithful, those who have given themselves to me so that I may lead them to my divine Son, those whom I carry in my arms, so to speak, those who have lived on my spirit. Finally, I call on the Apostles of the Last Days, the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ who have lived in scorn for the world and for themselves, in poverty and in humility, in scorn and in silence, in prayer and in mortification, in chastity and in union with God, in suffering and unknown to the world. It is time they came out and filled the world with light. Go and reveal yourselves to be my cherished children. I am at your side and within you, provided that your faith is the light that shines upon you in these unhappy days. May your zeal make you famished for the glory and the honor of Jesus Christ. Fight, children of light, you, the few who can see. For now is the time of all times, the end of all ends.

"The Church will be in eclipse, the world will be in dismay. But now, Enoch and Eli will come, filled with the Spirit of God. They will preach with the might of God, and men of good will shall believe in God, and many souls will be comforted. They will make great steps forward through the virtue of the Holy Spirit and will condemn the devilish lapses of the Antichrist. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth! There will be bloody wars and famines, plagues and infectious diseases. It will rain with a fearful hail of animals. There will be thunderstorms that will shake cities, earthquakes that will swallow up countries. Voices will be heard in the air. Men will beat their heads against walls, call for their death, and, on another side, death will be their torment. Blood will flow on all sides. Who will be the victor if God does not shorten the length of the test? All the blood, the tears, and prayers of the righteous, God will relent. Enoch and Eli will be put to death. Pagan Rome will disappear. The fire of Heaven will fall and consume three cities. All the universe will be struck with terror and many will let themselves be lead astray because they have not worshipped the true Christ who lives among them. It is time; the sun is darkening; only faith will survive.

"Now is the time; the abyss is opening. Here is the King of Kings of darkness; here is the Beast with his subjects, calling himself the Savior of the world. He will rise proudly into the air to go to Heaven. He will be smothered by the breath of the Archangel Saint Michael. He will fall, and the earth, which will have been in a continuous series of evolutions for three days, will open up its fiery bowels; and he will have plunged for all eternity with all his followers into the everlasting chasms of hell. Then water and fire will purge the earth and consume all the works of men's pride and all will be renewed. God will be served and glorified."

IV

Then the Holy Virgin gave me, also in French, THE RULE OF A NEW RELIGIOUS ORDER. When she had given me the Rule of this new religious order, the Holy Virgin continued the speech in the same manner. ³

"If they convert, the stones and rocks will change into wheat, and potatoes will be found sown in the earth. Do you say your prayers properly, my children?"

We both replied, "Oh! No, Madame, not so much."

"Oh! My children, you must say them morning and evening. When you can do no more, say a Pater and an Ave Maria; and when you have the time to do better, you will say more."

"Only a few old women go to Mass; in the summer, the rest work all day Sunday and in the winter, when they are at a loose end, they only go to Mass to make fun of religion. During Lent, they go to the butcher's like hungry dogs."

"Have you ever seen any spoilt wheat, my children?"

We both answered, "Oh no, Madame."

The Holy Virgin turned to Maximin, saying:

"But you, my child, you must have seen some once near le 'Coin,' with your father. The farmer said to your father, 'Come and see how my wheat's gone bad!' You went to see. Your father took two or three ears in his hand, rubbed them, and they fell to dust. Then, on your way back, when you were no more than half an hour away from Corps, your father gave you a piece of bread and said, 'Take it, eat it while you can, my son, for I don't know who will be eating anything next year if the wheat is spoiled like that!'"

Maximin replied, "It's quite true, Madame, I didn't remember."

The Most Holy Virgin brought her speech to an end in French.

"AND SO, MY CHILDREN, YOU WILL PASS THIS ON TO ALL MY PEOPLE."

The most beautiful Lady crossed the stream and, after two more steps, without turning back towards us, who were following her (for we were drawn to her by her brilliance and even more by her kindness, which elated me and seemed to melt my heart), she repeated to us:

"AND SO, MY CHILDREN, YOU WILL PASS THIS ON TO ALL MY PEOPLE."

Then, she walked on up to the place where I had gone to see our cows. Her feet touched nothing but the tips of the grass and without bending them. Once on the top of the little mound, the beautiful Lady stopped, and I hurried to stand in front of her to look at her so, so closely, and try to see which path she was most inclined to take. For it was all over for

me. I had forgotten both my cows and my masters. I had linked myself forever and unconditionally to my Lady. Yes, I wanted never, never to leave her. I followed her with no other motive and fully disposed to serve her for the rest of my life.

In the presence of my Lady, I felt I had forgotten paradise. I thought of nothing more but to serve her in every way possible; and I felt I could have done everything she could have asked me to do, for it seemed to me that she had a great deal of power. She looked at me with a tender kindness, which drew me to her. I could have thrown myself into her arms with my eyes closed. She did not give me the time to do so. She rose imperceptibly from the ground to a height of around four feet or more. Hanging thus in the air for a split second, my beautiful Lady looked up to Heaven, then down on the earth to her right and then her left. ⁴

Then she looked at me with her eyes so soft, so kind, and so good that I felt she was drawing me inside her, and my heart seemed to open up to hers.

As my heart melted away, sweetly gladdened, the beautiful face of my good Lady disappeared little by little. It seemed to me that the light in motion was growing stronger, or rather condensing around the Most Holy Virgin, to prevent me from seeing her any longer.

Thus, light took the place of the parts of her body that were disappearing in front of my eyes. It seemed to me that the body of my Lady was melting into light. Thus, the sphere of light rose gently towards the right. I cannot say whether the volume of light decreased as she rose, or whether the growing distance made me see less and less light as she rose. What I do know, is that I was a long time with my head raised up, staring at the light, even after the light, which kept getting further away and decreasing in volume, had finally disappeared. I take my eyes from the firmament. I look around me.

I see Maximin looking at me, and I say to him, "Maxi, that must have been my father's Good Lord, or the Holy Virgin, or some other great saint." ⁵

Maximin throws his arms into the air and says, "Oh! If only I'd known!"

V

On the evening of the 19th of September, we went back down a little earlier than usual. When I arrived at my master's farm, I was busy tying up my cows and tidying up in the stable, and had not yet finished when my mistress came up to me in tears and said, "Why, my child, why didn't you come and tell me what happened on the mountain?"

Maximin, not having found his masters who were still at work, had come over to mine and recounted everything he had seen and heard. I replied, "I did want to tell you, but I

wanted to get my work finished first.” A moment later, I walked over to the house and my mistress said to me, “Tell me what you have seen. De Bruite, the shepherd (that was the nick name of Pierre Selme, Maximin's master), has told me everything.”

I began, and towards the middle of the account, my master arrived back from the fields. My mistress, who was in tears at hearing the complaints and threats of our sweet Mother, said, “Ah! You were going to harvest the wheat tomorrow (Sunday). Take great care. Come and hear what happened today to this child and Pierre Selme's shepherd-boy.” Turning to me, she said, “Repeat everything you have said.”

I started again. When I had finished, my master said, “It was the Holy Virgin or else a great saint, who has come on behalf of the Good Lord, but it's as if the Good Lord had come Himself. We must do what this Saint said. How are you going to manage to tell that to all her people?”

I replied, “You tell me how I must go about it, and I will do it.”

Looking at his mother, wife, and brother, he added, “I'll have to think about that.” Then everyone went back to their business.

After supper, Maximin and his masters came over to see my masters and to recount what Maximin had told them, and decide what was to be done.

“For,” they said, “it seems to us that it was the Holy Virgin sent by the Good Lord. The words that she spoke convince us of this. She told them to pass it on to all of her people. Perhaps these children will have to travel the world over to make it known that everyone must observe the commandments of the Good Lord, lest great misfortunes come upon us.”

After a moment's silence, my master said to Maximin and me, “Do you know what you must do, my children? Tomorrow, you must get up early and both of you go and see the priest and tell him everything you have seen and heard. Tell him carefully how it all happened. He will tell you what you have to do.”

The day after the Apparition, September 20, I left early in the morning with Maximin. When we reached the presbytery, I knocked at the door. The priest's housekeeper opened the door and asked us what we wanted. I said to her (in French, and I, who had never spoken French), “We would like to speak to Father Perrin.”

“And what have you got to say to him?” she asked.

“We wish to tell him, Miss, that yesterday we went up to watch over our cows on Baisses Mountain and after dinner, etc., etc.” We recounted a good piece of the Most Holy Virgin's words. Then the church-bell rang. It was the final call for Mass. Father Perrin, the parish priest of La Salette, who had heard us, flung open his door. He was in tears and was beating his chest. He said to us:

“My children, we are lost. God will punish us. Oh! Good Lord! It was the Holy Virgin who appeared to you!” Then he left to say Holy Mass. We looked at each other, Maximin, the housekeeper, and I. Then Maximin said to me, “Me, I’m off to my father in Corps,” and we parted company.

As my masters had not told me to return to work immediately after speaking to Father Perrin, I saw no harm in going to Mass. So, I was in church. Mass began and after the first reading from the Gospel, Father Perrin turned to the congregation and tried to recount, to his parishioners, the story of the Apparition that had taken place the day before on one of their mountains. He urged them to stop working on Sundays. His voice was broken with sobs, and all the congregation was greatly moved. After Holy Mass, I went back to my masters to work. Mr. Peytard, who still today is the mayor of La Salette, 6 came to question me on the Apparition. When he had made sure that I was speaking the truth, he went away convinced.

I stayed on in the service of my masters until All Saints’ Day. Then I was boarded with the nuns of Providence, in my home town of Corps.

VI

The Most Holy Virgin was tall and well-proportioned. She seemed so light that a mere breath could have stirred her, yet she was motionless and perfectly balanced. Her face was majestic, imposing, but not imposing in the manner of the Lords here below. She compelled a respectful fear. At the same time as her Majesty compelled respect mingled with love, she drew me to her. Her gaze was soft and penetrating. Her eyes seemed to speak to mine, but the conversation came out of a deep and vivid feeling of love for this ravishing beauty who was liquefying me. The softness of her gaze and her air of incomprehensible goodness made me understand and feel that she was drawing me to her and wanted to give herself. It was an expression of love that cannot be expressed with the tongue of the flesh, or with the letters of the alphabet.

The clothing of the Most Holy Virgin was silver white and quite brilliant. It was quite intangible. It was made up of light and glory, sparkling and dazzling. There is no expression or comparison to be found on earth that could describe it.

The Holy Virgin was all beauty and all love. The sight of her overwhelmed me. In her finery as in her person, everything radiated the majesty, the splendor, the magnificence of a Queen beyond compare. She seemed as white, immaculate, crystallized, dazzling, heavenly, fresh, and new as a Virgin. The word LOVE seemed to slip from her pure and silvery lips. She appeared to me like a good Mother, full of kindness, amiability, love for us, compassion, and mercy.

The crown of roses she had placed on her head was so beautiful, so brilliant, that it defies imagination. The different colored roses were not of this earth. It was a joining together of flowers that crowned the head of the Most Holy Virgin, but the roses kept changing and replacing each other. Then, from the heart of each rose, there shone a beautiful entrancing light that gave the roses a shimmering beauty. From the crown of roses there seemed to arise golden branches and a number of little flowers mingled with the shining ones. The whole thing formed a most beautiful diadem, which alone shone brighter than our earth's sun.

The Holy Virgin had a most pretty cross hanging round her neck. This cross seemed golden. (I say golden rather than gold-plated, for I have sometimes seen objects that were golden with varying shades of gold, which had a much more beautiful effect on my eyes than simple gold plate.) On this shining, beautiful cross, there was a Christ. It was Our Lord on the Cross. There was a hammer near both ends of the cross and a pair of tongs at the other end. The Christ was skin-colored, but He shone dazzlingly. The light that shone forth from His holy body seemed like brightly shining darts that pierced my heart with the desire to melt inside Him. At times, the Christ appeared to be dead. His head was bent forward and His body seemed to give way, as if about to fall, had He not been held back by the nails that held him to the Cross.

I felt a deep compassion and would have liked to tell the whole world of His unknown love and to let seep into mortal souls the most heartfelt love and gratitude towards a God who had no need whatsoever of us to be everything He is, was, and always will be. Yet, O love that men cannot understand, He made Himself man, and wanted to die, yes, die, so as to better inscribe in our souls and in our memory, the passionate love He has for us! Oh, how wretched am I to find myself so poor in my expression of the love of our good Savior for us! But, in another way, how happy we are to be able to feel more deeply that which we cannot express!

At other times, the Christ appeared to be alive. His head was erect, His eyes open, and He seemed to be on the cross of His own accord. At times too, He appeared to speak. He seemed to show that He was on the cross for our sake, out of love for us, to draw us to His love, and that He always has more love to give us, that His love in the beginning and in the year 33 is always that of today and will be forever more.

The Holy Virgin was crying nearly the whole time she was speaking to me. Her tears flowed gently, one by one, down to her knees, then, like sparks of light, they disappeared. They were glittering and full of love. I would have liked to comfort her and stop her tears. But it seemed to me that she needed the tears to show better her love forgotten by men. I would have liked to throw myself into her arms and say to her, "My kind Mother, do not cry! I want to love you for all men on earth." But she seemed to be saying to me, "There are so many who know me not!"

I was in between life and death and, on one side, I saw so much desire by this Mother to be loved, and, on another side, so much cold and indifference. Oh! My most beautiful and lovable Mother, my love, heart of my heart!

The tears of our sweet Mother, far from lessening her air of majesty, of a Queen and a Mistress, seemed, on the contrary, to embellish her, to make her more beautiful, more powerful, more filled with love, more maternal, more ravishing, and I could have wiped away her tears, which made my heart leap with compassion and love. To see a mother cry, and such a Mother, without doing everything possible to comfort her and change her grief to joy, is that possible? Oh! Mother, who is more than good, you have been formed with all the prerogatives God is able to make. You have married the power of God, so to speak; you are good, and more, you are good with the goodness of God Himself. God has extended Himself by making you His terrestrial and celestial masterpiece.

The Most Holy Virgin had a yellow pinafore. What am I saying, yellow? She had a pinafore more brilliant than several suns put together. It was not a tangible material; it was composed of glory, and this glory was scintillating, and ravishingly beautiful. Everything in the Holy Virgin carried me firmly and made me kind of slide into the adoration and love of my Jesus in every state of His mortal life.

The Most Holy Virgin had two chains, one a little wider than the other. The cross that I mentioned earlier hung from the narrower one. These chains (since they must be given the name of chains) were like rays of brightly shining glory—sparkling and dazzling. Her shoes (since they must be called shoes) were white, but a silvery brilliant white. There were roses around them. These roses were dazzlingly beautiful and from the heart of each rose there shone forth a flame of very beautiful and pleasing light. On Her shoes, there was a buckle of gold, not the gold of this earth, but rather the gold of paradise.

The sight of the Holy Virgin was itself a perfect paradise. She had everything needed to satisfy, for earth had been forgotten. The Holy Virgin was surrounded by two lights. The first light, the nearer to the Most Holy Virgin, reached as far as us. It shone most beautifully and scintillatingly.

The second light shone out a little around the Beautiful Lady and we found ourselves bathed in it. It was motionless (that is to say it wasn't scintillating) but much more brilliant than our poor sun on earth. All this light did not harm nor tire the eyes in any way.

In addition to all these lights, all this splendor, there shone forth concentrations or beams of light and single rays of light from the body of the Holy Virgin, from her clothes and from all over her.

The voice of the Beautiful Lady was soft. It was enchanting, ravishing, warming to the heart. It satisfied, flattered every obstacle, it soothed and softened. It seemed to me I

could never stop eating up her beautiful voice and my heart seemed to dance or want to go towards her and melt inside her.

The eyes of the most Holy Virgin, our Sweet Mother, cannot be described in human language. To speak of them, you would need a seraph, you would need more than that, you would need the language of God Himself, of the God who formed the immaculate Virgin, the masterpiece of His omnipotence. The eyes of the majestic Mary appeared thousands of times more beautiful than the rarest brilliants, diamonds, and precious stones. They shone like two suns. They were soft, softness itself, as clear as a mirror. In her eyes, you could see paradise. They drew you to her, she seemed to want to draw and give herself.

The more I looked, the more I wanted to see; the more I saw, the more I loved her and I loved her with all my might.

The eyes of the beautiful Immaculate One were like the door to God's Kingdom, from which you could see all that can elate the soul. When my eyes met those of the Mother of God, I felt inside me a happy revolution of love and a declaration that I love her and am melting with love. As we looked at each other, our eyes spoke to each other in their fashion, and I loved her so much I could have kissed her in the middle of her eyes, which touched my soul and seemed to draw it towards them and make it melt into hers. Her eyes set up a sweet trembling in all my being; and I was afraid to make the slightest movement that might cause her the smallest displeasure.

Just the sight of the eyes of the purest of Virgins would have been enough to make the Heaven of a blessed creature, enough to fill the soul with the will of the Most High amid the events that occur in the course of mortal life, enough to make the soul perform continual acts of praise, thanksgiving, atonement, and expiation. Just this sight focuses the soul on God, and makes it like a living death to look upon all the things of this earth, even the things that seem the most serious, as nothing but children's playthings. The soul would want to hear no one speaking unless speaking of God, and of that which affects His Glory.

Sin is the only evil she sees on earth. She will die of grief unless God sustains her.

Amen.

MARIA OF THE CROSS,

Victim of Jesus

nee

MELANIE CALVAT,

Shepherdess of La Salette

Castellamare, 21st of November 1878

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER OF MELANIE RELATING TO THE SECRET OF LA SALETTE

“I anticipate with great pleasure the ‘Secret’ circulating at full extent; the more it spreads the more it will arouse salutary fear and numerous returns to God. Mary will bless those who help at the diffusion of the Secret, as she absolutely wants this passed on to all of the people. We are punished for having neglected this absolute order from the Mother of God.”

REFERENCES

1. Neither Melanie nor Maximin understood French. The Beautiful Lady now continues her speech in “patois.”
2. In a letter to Father Combe, dated October 7, 1899, Melanie corrects these words in parenthesis, which are her own, she says, and which she judges to be unclear and inaccurate. “That is to say,” she writes, “that in those days, which only seem like twenty years ago, some perverted people (Italian: malvages) had given themselves over to devotion to the demon of magic. These people would cause to appear in the eyes of the curious, acquainted, and theirs who had not led a Christian way of life.

“These supposedly resurrected individuals appeared in heavenly glory. People known to have lived in the fear of God appeared to be in horrible suffering, and urged their friends and acquaintances not to follow in their footsteps, and they preached a Gospel opposed to that of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It seems that these bizarre occurrences may be put down to the fashion for spiritualistic evocations and for certain spiritualistic and demoniac practices that no doubt will one day be brought to light through a thorough examination of the Luciferian archives of Freemasonry.”

In the same letter, Melanie takes care to explain that where it is said that people will be transported from one place to another, it must be understood as to be in rare cases only.

3. In patois.
4. “In which direction had the Holy Virgin turned when she rose?”
“That way (she pointed to the East). I know that Rome is in that direction.”

(Conversation with Melanie, Miss des Brulais, 8 September 1849.)

5. “My Father's Good Lord: this is the crucifix, this living crucifix which the beautiful Lady wears round her neck, and which seemed to talk to her. The Holy Virgin...” Melanie does not seem to have doubted for a moment that it was her. This comes out in the account, however, she does not dare to be the first to state it. It is for the Church of Jesus Christ to do so, she has this intuition. In effect, the next morning, it is the parish priest of La Salette who cries out, at the account of the two children:

“It was the Holy Virgin who appeared to you,” and from the pulpit, announces this to his parishioners and to all the faithful ones among them.

6. Today: 21st of November 1878, when this account was written.

ADDITIONAL WORDS OF MELANIE

“The great chastisement will come, because men will not be converted; yet it is only their conversion that can hinder these scourges. God will begin to strike men by inflicting lighter punishments in order to open their eyes; then He will stop, or may repeat His former warnings to give place for repentance. But sinners will not avail themselves of these opportunities. He will, in consequence, send more severe castigations, anxious to move sinners to repentance, but all in vain. Finally, the obduracy of sinners shall draw upon their heads the greatest and most terrible calamities.

“We are all guilty! Penance is not done, and sin increases daily. Those who should come forward to do good are retained by fear. Evil is great. A moderate punishment serves only to irritate the spirits, because they view all things with human eyes. God could work a miracle to convert and change the aspect of the earth without chastisement. God will work a miracle; it will be a stroke of His mercy. But after the wicked shall have inebriated themselves with blood, the scourge shall arrive.

“What countries shall be preserved from such calamities? Where shall we go for refuge? I, in my turn, shall ask, What is the country that observes the commandments of God? What country is not influenced by human fear where the interest of the Church and the glory of God are at stake? (Ah, indeed! What country, what nation upon earth?) On behalf of my Superior and myself, I have often asked myself where we could go for refuge, had we the means for the journey and for our subsistence, on condition that no person were to know it? But, I renounce these useless thoughts. We are very guilty! In consequence of this, it is necessary that a very great and terrible scourge should come to revive our faith and to restore to us our very reason, which we have almost entirely lost. Wicked men are devoured by a thirst for exercising their cruelty; but when they shall have reached the uttermost point of barbarity, God Himself shall extend His hand to stop them, and very soon after, a complete change shall be effected in all surviving persons.

Then they will sing the Te Deum Laudamus with the most lively gratitude and love. The Virgin Mary, our Mother, shall be our liberatrix. Peace shall reign, and the charity of Jesus Christ shall unite all hearts. Let us pray; let us pray. God does not wish to chastise us severely. He speaks to us in so many, so many ways to make us return to Him. How long shall we remain stubborn? Let us pray, let us pray; let us never cease praying and doing penance. Let us pray for our Holy Father the Pope, the only light for the faithful in these times of darkness. O yes, let us, by all means, pray much. Let us pray to good, sweet, merciful Virgin Mary; for we stand in great need of her powerful hands over our heads.”

WORDS OF MAXIMIN

“In this time the Antichrist will be born of a nun of Hebraic descent, a false virgin, who will have intercourse with the ancient serpent, with the master of impurity and putrefaction. His father will be a bishop. He will perform false miracles and subsist only on vitiating faith. He will have brethren, who will be children of evil but not incarnate devils like himself. Soon they will be at the head of armies, supported by the legions of hell.”



Our Lady of La Salette, talking to the children
(2nd stage of the apparition) from a scan of a French postcard of 1896. *



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